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Anil Hira

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Should Economists Rule the World? Trends and Implications of Leadership Patterns in the Developing World, 1960–2005

ANIL HIRA

ABSTRACT. This article examines more carefully the oft-made hypotheses that (1) “technocrats” or politicians with an economics background are increasingly common and (2) that this “improvement” in qualifications will lead to improvements in economic policy. The article presents a database on the qualifications of leaders of the world’s major countries over the past four decades. The article finds that while there is evidence for increasing “technification,” there are also distinct and persistent historical patterns among Asian, African, Middle Eastern, and Latin American leaders. Using statistical analysis, the article finds that we *cannot* conclude that leadership training in economics leads to better economic outcomes.

Keywords: • Economic policy • Elites • Development • Leadership
• Neoliberalism • Technocrats

Introduction: Why Education Matters for Leadership

This article examines the educational background of world leaders from 1960–2005 to test out two “common knowledge” hypotheses. The first is that leaders in the developing world are increasingly well versed in economics. The second is that leaders trained in economics will create better-functioning economies. Indeed, much of the *raison d’être* of both international financial institutions and aid agencies is that they offer a level of expertise not available in the developing country. Thus, if decision-makers are better trained in economics, they should *ipso facto* be able to create improved economic conditions. If they are not, then either economics is ineffective as a tool in guiding developing economies or leaders’ educations do not make much difference, or both. Each of these outcomes to the study would have important implications for development decision-making. I set up a database with a sample of leaders of the past 50 years from around the world to test for perceived changes in educational backgrounds. The database for further

research use is found in Appendix 1 of the article. The article finds that in the developing world there has been a notable rising importance of economics as a background for leaders in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. It also finds, however, limited evidence that this has made an impact on economic outcomes.

Higher education self-evidently helps to define our basic orientation to the world, how it works, and our role within it. Therefore it seems logical to examine the effects of education on leadership (Elcock, 2001; Hermann, 1977; Ludwig, 2002). Several decades ago, before the behavioral revolution, there was great interest in how the aspects of a leader's early formation might have affected his or her judgment. All kidding aside, there has been a loss of focus in the social sciences on this all-important aspect of political life. In 1956, C. Wright Mills' iconic work, *The Power Elite*, focused attention on the importance of the evolving ways in which leadership groups are formed and interact in political, social, and economic decision-making. Mills pointed out the importance of social and other interconnections as a way of defining elites. He also noted that as birthright became less important, the sharing of educational experiences at elite institutions, such as Ivy League universities, became more important (Mills, 1956: 64):

What is lacking is a truly common elite program of recruitment and training ... But above all these demands reflect the at least vague consciousness on the part of the power elite themselves that the age of co-ordinated decisions, entailing a newly enormous range of consequences, requires a power elite that is of a new caliber. Insofar as the sweep of matters which go into the making of decisions is vast and interrelated, the information needed for judgments complex and requiring particularized knowledge, the men in charge will not only call upon one another; they will try to train their successors for the work at hand. (Mills, 1956: 295–6)

Of course, conceptions of elitism pre-date Mills, Gramsci, Mosca, and Marx. Aristotle talks extensively in *Politics* about the formation of oligarchic rulers, including via nobility and wealth. It is still important to pay attention to the means by which leadership recruitment changes in order to maintain differentiation, keeping in mind that the means to that differentiation depends not only on natural ability, but also access to resources. As the nature of differentiation changes, for whatever reason, rulership should also change in character. That change in character might have, as mainstream economic institutions often claim, benefits for decision-making. Exposure to intellectual training is expected not only to improve decision-makers' analyses, but is consistent with Weberian notions that increasingly complex decisions require greater training of decision-makers and their advisors. The complicated trade-offs and judgment calls required in basic decisions, such as where to set a prime interest rate, suggest the benefits of some knowledge of economics. Without some understanding of such complex issues, how would a leader be able to take in experts' advice, let alone weigh differing expert views? As Bourdieu (1996) points out, higher education is not only a form of "cultural" capital linked to economic capital, but can also be a way of creating new methods for mediating between opposing elite interests. Using biographical data, Bourdieu suggests that access to the highest levels of economic decision-making depends in part upon styles of conduct and thinking learned in elite academies as well as the resources that allow the sending of children to such institutions.

However, studies of these issues have fallen off with the move toward more quantitative methods in political science. For example, early work on “operational codes” (George, 1969) and perception (Jervis, 1969) in international relations seems to have lost fashion among current decision-making scholars who emphasize an expected utility or game theory approach to understanding the decisions leaders make (Bueno de Mesquita, 2002). Yet, it is important to note that even if we funnel decision-making into a more systematic expected utility framework, the preferences, perceptions of costs and benefits, and propensity to take risks will depend in good part upon the subjective judgment of the leader. In examining the landscape of extreme leaders throughout history, including Saddam Hussein, the present Kim Jong-Il, or any of a number of seemingly irrational characters, we see that a pure cost–benefit-analysis approach to decision-making is under-wrought. Though messy, it is important as social scientists that we consider the emotional sides of leadership; the way in which a leader looks at the world; how a leader creates an identity and links his own identity with a collective one, including some sense of historical destiny, using the media and created myth; whom the leader sees as heroes and enemies; and how the leader explains failures. All of these psychological aspects are key to understanding and anticipating how leadership works on the individual and collective levels.

Undoubtedly, one crucial aspect of any leader’s formation is his or her educational background. Countless leaders from Lenin to Mao to the current leader of the Zapatistas, Subcomandante Marcos, have been strongly affected by their exposure to key works that “uncover” how the world really works. In a more subtle fashion, education may not only orient leaders toward how the world works and what we should hold sacred and profane, but also gives rise to certain sets of skills, tools, and other modes of analysis that effectively define the types of variables and the limits of the territorial data that they will use in making decisions (Putnam, 1976).

Heinrich Best and Maurizio Cotta (2000: 515) point out in an extensive study of the backgrounds of parliamentarians from across Europe that education levels have risen over time. Moreover, a new and growing literature in the social sciences, particularly in development studies, claims that there is an increasing “technification” of policymaking, meaning that decision-makers increasingly come from more technical educational backgrounds and engage in more insulated and technical decision-making. In addition to the more general “epistemic communities” literature, which points to the increasing importance of experts in international organizations, there is a growing body of literature which examines the rise of technocratic elites within domestic decision-making (for example, Centeno and Silva, 1998; Dominguez, 1997; Hira, 1998; Montecinos, 1998).

Throughout the world, this academic trend seems confirmed by the apparently increasing impact that economists have had in the political arena. From India to Brazil, the adoption of neoliberal economic policies has apparently been a result of, and accompanied by, the rise of a newly important group: economists. How would we measure or test such a claim, and to what extent has technification taken place? The best way would be to gather data across time and space on decision-making in order to test out these notions. Unfortunately, such data are only painstakingly available, and in limited form. For instance, there is no reliable source of measurement on whether the discourse of political decision-making has become more technical over time, though we suspect that it has. Perhaps a

content analysis of political speeches or press stories cross-temporally and cross-geographically might reveal some hard evidence for this trend. Also, we would like to know the backgrounds of key decision-makers and how different posts have changed in priority. For example, the increasing importance of finance ministers, such as Domingo Cavallo in Argentina, or even central bank chairmen, such as Alan Greenspan, seems obvious. In unparalleled extensive studies of the Mexican elite over two centuries of recruitment, Roderic Ai Camp (1995: 101) finds an increasing spread and legitimacy for economics not only among Mexican leaders, but throughout the bureaucracy. Latin American elites increasingly go to the USA to study economics. Camp (2002: 178–80) suggests several reasons for the trend. First, economics provided an edge in terms of a “lingua franca” of technical terminology that afforded power to returning leaders. Second, the increasingly abstract and mathematical nature of economics and its claims to universal application are not only appealing as a singular source for policy solutions, but also allow economists to claim a scientific basis for the truth and an intellectual superiority not available in other social science disciplines. Third, economists have created and developed recruiting networks to create followers. Lastly, these models of education are then replicated and multiplied in home institutions. The trend is not limited to Latin America; there clearly has been a major change in the education, orientation, and technical capacity of China’s lead bureaucracies, following the blueprint of earlier “pilot agencies” among its East Asian neighbors (Johnson, 1982; Li, 2001; Wade, 1990). However, given the paucity of consistent data about these matters on an international level, most studies of these trends rely on logical assertions and ubiquitous evidence. This article moves forward by testing the two hypotheses against the educational backgrounds of heads of government and economic outcomes under their leadership.

Research Methodology for World Leaders’ Education Database

In order to arrive at a more empirical answer to these questions, we constructed a database of 65 countries, mainly in the developing world (see sources in Appendix 2). We took a stratified sample by time and by country; in other words, we investigated the educational backgrounds of the leaders of each major country in various regions of the world for recent decades. Our database consists of the highest completed university education of each world leader in power in 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2005. Because of the new independence of the former communist bloc, Eastern Europe was excluded from the sample. Moreover, countries such as Saudi Arabia, with monarchies, were also left out, since the selection of decision-makers would have little to do with direct technical competence. Because of the paucity of data, the fact that many developing nations only became independent after World War II, and since the “technocratization” literature focuses on changes in the past three decades, we decided to use the 1960s as a starting point for our sample. While not a complete picture, this global sample should help us to answer whether there are *overall* international and regional trends in the educational backgrounds (with regard to “technification”) of government leaders over time. The creation of a population sample would be prohibitively costly to construct, since much of the biographical background of decision-makers and advisors outside of birth dates is haphazardly compiled, but my hope is that with the sharing of this database, collective efforts can improve it over time.

In setting up the database, we decided that the key aspect of a leader's background was whether the leader had a technical degree, operationalized as the person having studied economics, engineering, or business. We consider those with a technical degree at any level to be influenced by their educations relatively equally, no matter when they earned the degree. This brought up several interesting questions. One of these was whether to include degrees that were not completed, since even a limited experience might affect a decision-maker. We rejected this notion, since it would be impossible to gauge the relative weight of varying amounts of time spent studying a subject. Second, for those who are competent in two fields, such as law and engineering, we decided to count these as a dual competency. This led to some quirks in our calculations, of course, but we stand by the idea that a leader that is competent in two distinct areas brings both sets of skills and knowledge to the decision-making process. University degrees are divided into a few main categories: law, military, technical (that is, economics, business, and engineering), other, and none. We realize that the actual degree that a leader completes may not measure either competence or wisdom.

Findings on World Leaders' Educational Backgrounds, 1960–2005

We would expect that education would increase over time across leaders and that while many of the initial leaders of the independence movements in a context of uncertainty might be from military backgrounds, over time leaders with formal educational backgrounds would take over. According to our analysis presented below, this has certainly been the case internationally, with the "none" category declining. As well, in general, our first hypothesis holds up, namely, that more and more leaders come from an economics background. However, as we note below, there are important regional variations on these patterns.

As we can see from Table 1, Latin American leaders have traditionally come from legal backgrounds. The overall educational requirements are increasing over time, as indicated by the decreasing proportion with no formal degree. As we would expect, those with military backgrounds rose and declined with the waves of military takeovers of governments in the 1960s and 1970s and re-democratization in the 1980s and 1990s. However, the interesting aspect is that those with technical degrees have increased to historical highs, with law degrees losing ground in the last decade. Since the database looks only at top leaders, the actual trend for technocrats throughout government is likely one of steady increase over longer periods of time. Latin America is the only region with a significant number of doctors as leaders. As is notable in Appendix 1, increasing numbers of Latin leaders study abroad, and graduate with higher degrees, increasingly from the USA rather than Europe.

Sub-Saharan Africa has generally been wracked by ethnic strife and centralized authoritarian governments. There is a marked increase in economists. Three interesting quirks appear from our analysis of African leaders' backgrounds (see Table 2). The first is that, unlike Latin America, Africa does not have a strong tradition of leaders with legal backgrounds. Second, the number of military leaders does not seem to be significantly decreasing. Finally, we should note that Africa is the only region with significant numbers of leaders trained in the humanities, dating back to the independence generation, although they seem to have disappeared in the last decade. Notable in Appendix 1 is the fact that a number of African leaders have been trained in Europe rather than the USA.

TABLE 1. *Educational Backgrounds of Latin American Heads of State*

Education	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005	Total
Law	7	6	6	7	7	5	38
Military	2	7	6	2	2	1	20
Economics, business, engineering	3	1	2	4	4	6	20
Political science, public administration	0	1	0	2	0	0	3
Medicine	3	1	0	0	0	3	7
Other	0	0	1	4	4	2	11
None	3	3	3	1	1	1	12
Sum	18	19	18	20	18	18	111

Education	1960 (%)	1970 (%)	1980 (%)	1990 (%)	2000 (%)	2005 (%)	Total (%)
Law	39	32	33	35	39	28	34
Military	11	37	33	10	11	6	18
Economics, business, engineering	17	5	11	20	22	33	18
Political science, public administration	0	5	0	10	0	0	3
Medicine	17	5	0	0	0	17	6
Other	0	0	6	20	22	11	10
None	17	16	17	5	6	6	11

Source: See Appendix 1.

Oxford seems to be a common training ground for leaders from the continent. Unlike Latin leaders who initially stayed home to study, African leaders have a longer tradition of studying abroad.

The Middle East, given current US dreams to make over the region, is an area of particular interest. The region has had and continues to have a predominance of military leaders (Byman, 2005), with legal training about half as common (see Table 3). Initially, it appears that many of the nonmilitary leaders in the first years of independence were legally trained. Now it appears that more come from a religious background, unlike other regions. *Unlike every other region, there is no evidence for the technification of leadership.*

Table 4, showing Asian leaders' backgrounds, is perhaps the most interesting of all. While a good proportion of East and South Asian leaders continue to have military backgrounds, fewer and fewer are lawyers. A quarter are now technocrats, reflecting the importance placed on industrial policy in the region (Amsden, 1989).

How do these educational profiles compare with countries in the West? To test this question, I examined the leaders of the largest western economies (see Appendix 1 for the list and Table 5). As in the other regions, except for

TABLE 2. *Educational Backgrounds of African Heads of State*

Education	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005	Total
Law	1	2	1	2	2	3	11
Military	1	4	5	8	7	6	31
Economics, business, engineering	1	2	3	3	7	8	24
Political science, public administration	1	1	1	1	2	2	8
Medicine	1	2	1	1	0	0	5
Other	5	5	4	2	1	3	20
None	1	3	5	2	2	0	13
Sum	11	19	20	19	21	22	112

Education	1960 (%)	1970 (%)	1980 (%)	1990 (%)	2000 (%)	2005 (%)	Total (%)
Law	9	11	5	11	10	14	10
Military	9	21	25	42	33	27	28
Economics, business, engineering	9	11	15	16	33	36	21
Political science, public administration	9	5	5	5	10	9	7
Medicine	9	11	5	5	0	0	4
Other	45	26	20	11	5	14	18
None	9	16	25	11	10	0	12

Source: See Appendix 1.

TABLE 3. *Educational Backgrounds of Middle Eastern Leaders*

Education	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005	Total
Law	1	2	4	2	2	2	13
Military	7	6	4	5	5	6	33
Economics, business, engineering	0	1	1	1	1	1	5
Political science, public administration	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Medicine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Religion	0	1	1	1	1	1	5
Other	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
None	1	0	0	1	1	0	3
Sum	9	11	10	10	10	10	60

(TABLE 3 continued)

(TABLE 3 continued)

Education	1960 (%)	1970 (%)	1980 (%)	1990 (%)	2000 (%)	2005 (%)	Total (%)
Law	11	18	40	20	20	20	22
Military	78	55	40	50	50	60	55
Economics, business, engineering	0	9	10	10	10	10	8
Political science, public administration	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Medicine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Religion	0	9	10	10	10	10	8
Other	0	9	0	0	0	0	2
None	11	0	0	10	10	0	5

Source: See Appendix 1.

TABLE 4. *Educational Backgrounds of Asian Leaders*

Education	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005	Total
Law	6	4	2	3	2	1	18
Military	4	7	7	5	3	2	28
Economics, business, engineering	2	0	0	2	3	6	13
Political science, public administration	1	0	0	1	2	2	6
Medicine	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
Other	0	1	2	3	2	2	10
None	1	2	2	0	2	1	8
Sum	14	14	13	15	15	14	85

Education	1960 (%)	1970 (%)	1980 (%)	1990 (%)	2000 (%)	2005 (%)	Total (%)
Law	43	29	15	20	13	7	21
Military	29	50	54	33	20	14	33
Economics, business, engineering	14	0	0	13	20	43	15
Political science, public administration	7	0	0	7	13	14	7
Medicine	0	0	0	7	7	0	2
Other	0	7	15	20	13	14	12
None	7	14	15	0	13	7	9

Source: See Appendix 1.

the Middle East, military backgrounds have become less important over time. Technification trends do not hold here. Leaders are traditionally lawyers. It is likely not coincidental that the brief spike of technocratically trained leaders in the 1970s and 1980s corresponded with the stagflation crises in the West.

TABLE 5. *Educational Backgrounds of Western Leaders*

Education	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005	Total
Law	3	2	2	5	6	6	24
Military	4	1	1	0	0	0	6
Economics, business, engineering	1	3	6	1	1	1	13
Political science, public administration	1	3	3	2	0	1	10
Medicine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	4	1	1	0	0	6
None	0	1	0	0	1	0	2
Sum	9	14	13	9	8	8	61

Education	1960 (%)	1970 (%)	1980 (%)	1990 (%)	2000 (%)	2005 (%)	Total (%)
Law	33	14	15	56	75	75	39
Military	44	7	8	0	0	0	10
Economics, business, engineering	11	21	46	11	13	13	21
Political science, public administration	11	21	23	22	0	13	16
Medicine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	29	8	11	0	0	10
None	0	7	0	0	13	0	3

Source: See Appendix 1.

Comparison and Summary of Findings

Our findings suggest several possibilities for explaining the patterns of change that deserve further study, as follows:

1. Where civil strife exists (Africa and the Middle East, plus Latin America and the West during the cold war), military men are often the choices for leader.
2. Where political and military stability reign, but economic turmoil becomes paramount, or where economic issues become relatively more important (for example, a debt crisis), societal interest in economics will increase, and more economists will become leaders. However, having economists as leaders has not led to more satisfactory results, as we discuss below. For example, recently, President Alejandro Toledo of Peru, a former World Bank economist, became increasingly unpopular and ineffective; Haji Mohammed Suharto's many years of attention to economics did not prevent him from being overthrown amid the Asian financial crisis and major corruption; and the business background of George W. Bush has not helped improve the US economy.
3. In long-standing democratic societies, in the absence of economic crisis, leaders find it advantageous to have a legal degree. Perhaps absent major crisis, politics is conducted in a more institutionalized landscape. Among developing regions, only Latin America has a strong tradition of law, going back to the strong legalism of Iberian colonization.

Has the Rise of Economists Through Much of the Developing World Led to Better Results?

R.A. Camp (2002) notes that there is no doubt that the shift toward economics among Mexican decision-makers went hand in hand with the shift toward neoliberalism. Paralleling my own research on Latin America (Hira, 1998), Camp (2002: 167) states that the training received in mainstream economics from Harvard and Yale served to bond expatriate Mexican elites and to change their thinking toward the benefits of liberalization. Neoliberalism, which can be roughly dated from the 1980s as a *force du jour*, was symbolized by the Reagan and Thatcher revolutions in the USA and UK. These leaders embraced the idea, as Reagan famously put it, that government was “part of the problem, not the solution.” In the OPEC oil price-induced inflationary and low-growth spirals, these leaders instituted a monetary shock treatment of higher interest rates and tight money in order to stop inflation. They also promoted the University of Chicago’s ideas championed by M. Friedman that markets are the best decision-makers in economics, and states almost always second best. The spread of these ideas to the developing world, pushed hard by international financial institutions during the 1980s’ debt crisis, included balancing budgets and liberalizing trade and investment rules, reversing

TABLE 6. *Openness of Economies to Global Market Forces, 1960–2005*

	Average 1950–59	Average 1960–69	Average 1970–79	Average 1980–89	Average 1990–99	Average 2000–03	Increasing openness? (blank = yes)
Algeria		107.51	105.69	89.80	63.55	65.21	N
Argentina	7.70	8.23	7.86	10.43	18.03	21.32	
Australia	19.38	21.48	23.26	26.60	37.96	44.59	
Bolivia	36.78	42.67	38.03	32.47	43.56	46.61	
Botswana			96.05	112.70	97.52	92.26	N
Brazil	15.16	10.00	12.99	11.78	18.21	26.06	
Canada	32.78	35.49	45.68	48.73	70.51	81.94	
Chile	19.64	23.65	26.91	36.45	52.32	62.84	
China	10.14	11.58	14.53	41.59	43.50	48.15	
Colombia	30.44	25.57	25.34	26.79	39.84	41.81	
Congo		94.57	93.88	67.48	67.73	124.32	
Costa Rica	28.37	30.69	44.66	46.41	76.93	93.38	
Cote d’Ivoire		70.33	89.21	78.11	68.17	71.10	N
Cuba			81.86	58.07	28.41	30.87	N
Dominican Republic	48.76	37.19	46.30	38.68	41.10	37.94	N
Ecuador	47.57	51.65	61.67	52.97	65.11	73.05	
Egypt	81.63	84.82	88.09	68.53	47.36	38.65	N
El Salvador	34.80	40.96	43.19	36.11	48.19	70.84	
Ethiopia	14.97	23.15	27.16	32.34	23.11	47.64	
France	14.94	18.24	27.60	32.64	43.22	56.37	
Germany			29.57	36.91	50.03	68.98	

(TABLE 6 continued)

	Average 1950–59	Average 1960–69	Average 1970–79	Average 1980–89	Average 1990–99	Average 2000–03	Increasing openness? (blank = yes)
Ghana	428.11	491.81	134.87	62.72	89.43	94.22	N
Guatemala	39.40	49.22	52.47	34.08	41.16	48.92	
Haiti			20.44	26.77	29.07		
Honduras	85.82	100.52	120.45	97.32	96.77	99.26	
India	23.87	20.96	14.49	13.66	20.62	29.26	
Indonesia		55.67	72.92	75.21	79.50	74.25	
Iran	37.48	43.58	81.47	58.18	50.82	45.14	N
Iraq			89.77	76.39	14.24	21.54	N
Israel	22.48	32.39	45.09	51.10	58.82	72.53	
Italy	11.50	19.44	28.42	32.57	45.74	54.62	
Japan	5.04	7.72	11.80	14.04	16.86	20.38	
Jordan	34.70	41.51	83.25	120.83	133.55	117.48	
Kenya	57.89	64.58	73.84	46.38	56.09	64.17	N
S. Korea	5.24	7.96	24.35	37.52	54.02	78.87	
Malaysia	87.87	84.31	86.14	109.24	193.52	213.57	
Mexico	18.84	15.82	15.20	19.25	38.65	62.92	
Nicaragua	32.68	41.35	47.81	34.12	54.33	74.30	
Nigeria	8.54	11.66	22.83	25.35	45.66	83.74	
Pakistan	31.03	34.24	33.10	32.05	31.75	30.97	N
Paraguay	27.17	27.72	33.43	39.16	83.24	54.72	
Peru	32.00	36.83	25.62	24.06	30.08	35.35	N
Philippines	67.26	52.40	49.59	64.06	100.94	108.46	
Senegal		77.00	77.66	79.37	75.73	101.11	
Sierra Leone			31.66	34.81	27.10	28.20	
Singapore		126.67	164.27	241.76	331.89	389.02	
South Africa	60.01	61.29	55.96	39.84	46.98	51.65	
Sudan			26.08	24.88	17.42	32.77	
Syria		76.83	71.28	54.42	68.09	68.32	
Taiwan	15.55	23.86	56.17	72.54	90.42	102.96	
Tanzania		33.50	41.57	38.92	48.29	43.36	
Thailand	39.30	46.77	50.81	57.82	98.62	123.54	
Tunisia		84.24	89.97	97.51	93.02	93.88	
Turkey	11.34	12.19	13.68	22.62	37.14	56.48	
Uganda	41.36	47.51	29.52	34.48	33.52	37.08	N
UK	22.06	24.68	31.82	36.95	47.17	58.83	
USA	6.76	8.44	11.21	13.67	20.31	25.50	
Uruguay	18.05	15.96	20.23	24.70	35.39	37.98	
Venezuela	47.66	44.46	41.00	30.42	37.69	42.21	N
Zambia	208.02	201.76	139.48	59.06	58.79	50.99	N
Zimbabwe	67.65	53.27	32.34	34.51	59.36	69.14	N

Note: Blank cells indicate missing data. In the last column blank = yes, N = no.

Source: Author's calculations from Penn World Tables (2006).

the Keynesian notions of the postwar period. Thus, the base measure economists use for liberalization is openness to global market forces, calculated by totaling exports and imports and then dividing by Gross Domestic Product to control for the size of the economy. Table 6 shows that almost every economy across the world has become more open over time, and particularly from 1980.

If economists are selected as leaders in order to deal with economic crises, and choose openness because it is the logical policy under mainstream economic theory, how have they fared? There is evidence, in Latin America at least, that inflationary pressures have declined (Hira, 2007). However, the most important measure of economic performance for economists is growth in national economic production, measured by changes in GDP. In Table 7, we see that in the neoliberal period of increasing numbers of economist leaders, annual growth rates have improved in only a few countries, such as Chile. The claims for global reductions in poverty trumpeted by the World Bank and other aid agencies primarily reflect the significant growth in India and China. High-growth East Asian countries, such as South Korea, have actually slowed down since implementing neoliberal policies, responding to pressure following the financial crisis of 1997–2001. Thus, the exceptional performance of East Asia is not due to neoliberal, mainstream economics, but to other factors (Hira, 2007).

TABLE 7. *Average Annual Growth Rates, 1960–2005*

	Average 1960–69	Average 1970–79	Average 1980–89	Average 1990–99	Average 2000–03	Improvement under neoliberalism? (blank = no)
Algeria	4.10	7.17	2.80	1.57	3.98	
Argentina	4.10	2.92	-0.73	4.52	-1.83	
Australia	5.41	3.17	3.37	3.37	3.13	
Bolivia	3.20	4.03	-0.43	4.00	2.28	
Botswana	7.71	15.73	11.46	5.10	5.65	
Brazil	5.91	8.48	2.99	1.84	1.85	
Canada		4.22	2.98	2.44	3.13	
Chile	4.37	2.48	4.39	6.49	3.18	Y
China	3.01	7.44	9.75	9.71	8.28	Y
Colombia	5.08	5.81	3.41	2.86	2.53	
Congo	3.97	5.47	6.82	0.89	4.50	
Costa Rica	5.93	6.34	2.22	5.42	3.05	
Cote d'Ivoire	8.70	7.61	-0.24	2.62	-1.90	
Dominican Republic	4.82	8.19	3.83	4.59	3.55	
Ecuador	3.96	7.35	2.28	1.85	3.50	
Egypt	5.43	6.23	5.92	4.40	3.75	
El Salvador	5.98	3.90	-1.96	4.87	1.98	
France	5.56	3.72	2.37	1.76	1.90	

(TABLE 7 continued)

	Average 1960–69	Average 1970–79	Average 1980–89	Average 1990–99	Average 2000–03	Improvement under neoliberalism? (blank = no)
Germany		2.93	1.87	2.21	0.95	
Ghana	2.30	1.46	1.99	4.26	4.40	Y
Guatemala	5.49	5.86	0.96	4.06	2.55	
Haiti	0.40	3.59	0.39	-1.21	-0.05	
Honduras	4.93	5.78	2.50	2.76	3.38	
India	3.99	2.93	5.90	5.70	5.45	Y
Indonesia	3.73	7.83	6.38	4.83	4.05	
Iran (Islamic Republic of)		0.44	0.54	4.64	5.60	Y
Israel	9.08	5.80	3.65	5.39	1.95	
Italy	5.77	3.83	2.42	1.50	1.38	
Japan	10.44	5.29	3.72	1.71	1.38	
Jordan		15.23	3.97	4.88	4.15	
Kenya	5.73	7.17	4.23	2.13	0.95	
Korea, Republic of	8.26	8.28	7.67	6.26	5.60	
Malaysia	6.56	7.74	5.88	7.23	4.65	
Mexico	6.79	6.44	2.29	3.36	2.13	
Nicaragua	7.43	0.66	-0.77	2.99	2.63	
Nigeria	2.87	7.00	0.94	3.07	4.88	
Pakistan	6.79	4.84	6.87	3.99	3.63	
Paraguay	4.28	7.91	4.02	2.33	0.68	
Peru	5.26	3.95	0.35	3.25	2.93	
Philippines	5.06	5.79	2.01	2.77	4.48	
Senegal	1.27	3.02	2.50	3.24	4.70	
Sierra Leone	3.79	2.70	1.12	-4.26	5.23	
Singapore	9.47	9.32	7.49	7.63	2.85	
South Africa	6.19	3.38	2.33	1.38	2.93	
Sudan	1.22	4.27	3.39	4.51	6.15	
Syrian Arab Republic	6.81	8.82	2.83	5.93	2.43	
Thailand	7.82	7.51	7.30	5.28	4.80	
Tunisia	5.39	7.19	3.55	5.09	4.23	
Turkey		4.71	4.09	3.88	3.40	
United Kingdom	2.90	2.43	2.39	2.10	2.43	
United States	4.27	3.34	3.04	3.12	2.38	
Uruguay	1.30	2.70	0.71	3.26	-3.33	
Venezuela	4.80	3.97	-0.18	2.46	-3.08	
Zambia	3.79	1.62	1.44	0.37	4.23	
Zimbabwe	4.67	4.13	5.22	2.93	-6.30	

Note: Blank cells indicate missing data, except in last column where blank = no and Y = yes.

Source: Author's calculations from UNstats (2006).

Implications

While inflation has been under control, economic growth in most of the world has been disappointing and volatile. Control of inflation appears to have come at the price of recession, rather than producing more controlled and sustained growth. The World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and most mainstream economic institutions have attributed the disappointing results most recently to a lack of state capacity, which they label “governance,” including corruption, and have been pushing for fiscal reform, investment in human capital, and institutional reform. Why, then, do countries not follow this simple and obvious technical solution when so much progress has been made in monetary policy? We are left with two possible conclusions. The first is that the leaders, even if they understand what the “right” economic solutions would be, have severe limits on what they can accomplish. They may have external restraints that prevent them from modifying economic doctrine to meet the needs of growth. International finance emphasizes monetary stability because it wants stable exchange rates that will provide a stable borrowing–repayment atmosphere. As we see in Table 8, there has been limited improvement in reducing external dependency on outside finance for the majority of developing countries, with several exceptions as noted, although in most of those cases (such as Bolivia, Indonesia, Mexico, Pakistan, and Uganda) dependence remains notably high.

TABLE 8. *Debt Service as a Percentage of Exports of Goods, Services, and Net Income from Abroad*

	Average 1975–79	Average 1980–89	Average 1990–99	Average 2000–03	Improvement? (blank = no)
Algeria	22.35	44.80			
Angola		6.76	14.32	18.41	
Argentina	21.62	36.90	28.45	30.61	
Bolivia	31.63	34.36	27.59	18.26	Y
Botswana	2.14	3.29	3.52	1.74	
Brazil	25.26	32.60	22.31	37.34	
Chile	35.70	24.65	11.70	5.38	Y
China		8.16	8.69	3.88	Y
Colombia	10.40	25.23	27.37	28.95	
Congo	9.36	27.17	15.79	2.24	
Costa Rica	19.43	25.30	12.69	8.19	
Dominican Republic	10.64	17.95	7.97	6.50	Y
Ecuador	15.90	31.19	25.55	20.42	
El Salvador	4.74	16.39	15.67	9.03	
Ethiopia	5.94	23.65	21.54	12.43	
Ghana	6.44	27.20	25.55	11.84	
Guatemala	1.87	17.49	12.23	8.64	
Haiti	11.90	13.10	11.83	7.38	Y
Honduras	8.78	18.79	25.49	8.37	
India	14.19	20.01	26.47	15.36	
Indonesia		21.24	19.29	12.90	Y
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	0.00	3.53	13.63	5.09	
Jordan	7.19	20.89	20.42	16.36	
Kenya	7.58	24.81	23.25	14.05	

(TABLE 8 continued)

	Average 1975–79	Average 1980–89	Average 1990–99	Average 2000–03	Improvement? (blank = no)
Malaysia	6.09	11.25	5.11	3.97	Y
Mexico	58.06	30.15	20.15	12.74	Y
Myanmar	23.42	48.10	12.55	3.33	Y
Nicaragua	12.49	17.02	40.34	16.20	
Nigeria	1.02	18.25	15.94		
Pakistan	27.45	29.18	24.60	19.46	Y
Paraguay	7.97	17.07	8.13	7.35	
Peru	29.08	22.51	24.44	24.86	
Philippines	12.94	19.41	16.22	12.49	
Senegal	10.41	21.15	15.59	20.11	
Sierra Leone	17.11	20.72	32.76	38.94	
South Africa	0.00	0.00	3.46	5.17	
Sudan	15.53	18.57	6.61	2.24	Y
Syrian Arab Republic	9.35	12.59	5.27	2.52	Y
Thailand	3.28	12.22	4.83	8.14	
Tunisia	10.89	21.63	19.33	15.44	
Turkey	18.48	33.60	23.62	23.35	
Uganda		37.68	36.92	10.07	Y
United Republic of Tanzania	8.59	25.23	23.94	7.85	
Uruguay	36.08	23.61	19.79	28.39	
Zambia	22.08	25.44	22.14	13.72	
Zimbabwe	0.86	20.53			

Notes: Blanks mean missing data. In last column, blank = no, Y = yes.

Source: UNstats (2006).

This is a somewhat surprising result since basic economic doctrine would suggest a reduction of debt would be fiscally prudent. However, it may also suggest that what international economic advisors suggest and what they promote may be two different things.

The second source of explanation lies with domestic constraints. There is a huge difference between monetary policy controlled by a generally autonomous central bank and fiscal policy. Fiscal policy is messy and political in nature, requiring reductions in spending and increases in taxes (Hira and Dean, 2004). Technocratic solutions based on economic knowledge evidently are inadequate to grapple with these less quantifiable dimensions involving infinitely more complex political and institutional landscapes than the multilateral financial institutions suggest.

I would like to suggest a third line of explanation, equally important – that the basic design and theory of mainstream economics is flawed. The principal critique of neoliberalism, that it leads to greater inequality, buttresses our aforementioned point about the limits of technocratic decision-making to deal with problems of a more political nature. Unfortunately, economists have paid much more attention to questions of growth and efficiency than to those related to inequality. As a result, historical statistics are even more haphazard and inconsistent in regard to inequality. Table 9a contains GINI statistics culled from the

TABLE 9A: Selected GINI Statistics for the Developing World, 1950–2000

Latin America	Year	Africa and Middle East		Asia		Year	GINI
		GINI	Year	GINI	Year		
Argentina	1953	41.3	1959	42.0	Bangladesh	1960	41.8
Argentina	1961	43.4	Egypt	38.0	Bangladesh	1973	39.2
Argentina	1970	36.4	Egypt	34.0	Bangladesh	1981	37.1
Argentina	1980	42.5	Israel	29.1	Bangladesh	1986	33.9
Brazil	1960	53.0	Israel	23.8	India	1951	35.4
Brazil	1970	59.0	Israel	36.3	India	1960	32.5
Brazil	1972	62.5	Israel	37.3	India	1970	30.2
Brazil	1976	63.5	Israel	49.2	India	1983	31.4
Brazil	1978	57.8	Israel	52.1	India	1990	29.6
Brazil	1980	56.0	Morocco	50.0	S. Korea	1965	28.9
Brazil	1983	58.6	Morocco	54.5	S. Korea	1970	29.9
Chile	1964	46.2	Morocco	54.0	S. Korea	1982	30.6
Chile	1970	50.1	Tunisia	44.0	Sri Lanka	1953	47.3
Chile	1980	52.6	Tunisia	43.0	Sri Lanka	1963	27.4
Chile	1990	46.0	Tunisia	43.0	Sri Lanka	1970	30.9
Colombia	1967	48.4	Tunisia	41.0	Sri Lanka	1982	37.0
Colombia	1970	50.1	Turkey	53.0	Philippines	1961	51.0
Colombia	1982	57.8	Turkey	43.0	Philippines	1971	49.1

Latin America	Year	GINI	Africa and Middle East	Year	GINI	Asia	Year	GINI
Cuba	1953	47.1	Turkey	1973	57.0	Philippines	1985	45.5
Cuba	1953	56.7	Turkey	1983	57.0	Philippines	1991	47.9
Cuba	1962	35.4	South Africa	1960	54.0	Singapore	1976	45.0
Cuba	1973	28.3	South Africa	1970	51.0	Singapore	1980	43.0
Cuba	1978	27.0	South Africa	1980	49.0	Singapore	1990	46.0
Uruguay	1967	36.9	South Africa	1987	45.0	Singapore	1998	47.0
Uruguay	1976	40.5				Thailand	1962	43.7
Uruguay	1983	40.4				Thailand	1969	43.8
Uruguay	1987	38.7				Thailand	1975	42.8
						Thailand	1981	45.2
						Taiwan	1964	32.8
						Taiwan	1970	29.9
						Taiwan	1980	27.7
						Taiwan	1990	30.9
						Taiwan	2000	32.0

Source: UN WIDER database. (See Note 1 for an explanation of GINI.)

new UN WIDER database on income inequality, which brings together the findings of other studies.¹

Table 9a shows that some Latin American countries tend to follow the Kuznets curve of increasing levels of inequality and then return to the initial (also quite high) levels. In Argentina and Colombia, as well as the Middle East, income inequality increases over time, reflecting and feeding the volatility of their situations. Cuba's exceptional performance in this area has come, as is well known, with stagnant growth. The one African case for which there are data, South Africa, shows decreasing inequality, but the unique circumstances of that nation give no confidence that the overall pattern of the rest of the continent would not be in the opposite direction, were comparable data available. The pattern of income inequality in Asia has been distinct, declining in a few countries and stable in others. Therefore, we can conclude that Asia's success has come more in absolute rather than relative improvements.

Table 9b shows how countries in the West compare in relative inequality, while reflecting the paucity of reliable historical datasets on income inequality even in the West, the home of modern economics. The data we do have show that income inequality, as in Asia, has been stable or declining in most countries, with the UK (from Thatcher's time) and New Zealand being exceptions. Moreover, the baseline levels of relative inequality are much lower than in the developing world. This finding reinforces the common notion that inequality correlates with political, social, and economic instability.

Our review of the evidence suggests that economists are ineffective leaders both in their key stated goal of increasing economic growth and in addressing the most fundamental sources of conflict in developing societies, namely, inequality. The same would be true not only for microeconomic factors, such as the level of local technology, but also for a myriad of noneconomic problems, including subnationalism and ethnic strife, that have a direct impact on economic performance. It brings us again to the fact that economists are well trained in macroeconomic fundamentals, not in theories or policies of building consensus and reducing inequality. This suggests a new direction for economic research, including the construction of consistent datasets on inequality. Indeed, economists, engineers, and businessmen are supposed to be trained to make tough decisions based on hard analysis. Economic journals are filled with cold, hard calculations, and the discipline maintains a strong veneer of pseudo-scientific objectivism and formal modeling, which helps to explain its appeal as a more reliable analytical apparatus for decision-making than more "subjective" perspectives in the social sciences and humanities. Economists formally claim more humble territory, limited to questions of scarcity and efficient resource allocation. However, in practice, economists from John Maynard Keynes to Milton Friedman have powerfully influenced major shifts in how society operates. Economists such as Paul Krugman are now regular commentators on a wide variety of topics outside their formal domain. The problem is that economists have no greater insights or training into these broader questions, as is reflected in the absence of data and theories on institutions, inequality, and decision-making in their work.

The rise of technocrats is the result of greater access to technical education, particularly economics, and the relative reduction of political strife amid a relative increase in economic turmoil. The latter leads to changes in social demands; changes in the function of political legitimacy; and the reifying of the economic

TABLE 9B. *Selected GINI Statistics for Western Countries, 1950–2000*

West	Year	GINI	West	Year	GINI
Canada	1973	29.5	Italy	1967	40.4
Canada	1981	30.9	Italy	1970	39.0
Canada	1990	33.9	Italy	1980	37.5
Germany, West	1950	39.6	Italy	1989	29.8
Germany, West	1960	38.0	Italy	2000	33.4
Germany, West	1970	39.2	Japan	1962	38.1
Germany, West	1980	36.6	Japan	1970	41.4
Germany, West	1990	26.7	Japan	1980	33.4
Denmark	1939	45.0	New Zealand	1973	30.2
Denmark	1949	39.0	New Zealand	1980	34.7
Denmark	1955	39.0	New Zealand	1990	40.1
Denmark	1961	38.0	Sweden	1967	34.3
Denmark	1981	36.9	Sweden	1981	20.7
Denmark	1990	30.7	Sweden	1992	25.0
Spain	1973	37.6	Sweden	2000	27.2
Spain	1980	35.6	USA	1944	43.6
Spain	1990	34.8	USA	1950	43.1
France	1970	34.0	USA	1960	42.3
France	1979	30.0	USA	1968	40.6
France	1990	28.0	USA	1980	34.7
France	1999	27.0	USA	1990	38.1
United Kingdom	1961	25.5	USA	1996	39.2
United Kingdom	1970	25.4			
United Kingdom	1980	25.2			
United Kingdom	1990	33.5			
United Kingdom	2000	34.6			
Greece	1974	35.2			
Greece	1974	41.3			
Greece	1981	33.4			
Greece	1981	39.8			
Greece	1988	35.1			
Greece	1988	37.0			

mode of analysis to solve national problems. We are not in a position to judge the value of technocracy on a deeper level (that is, beyond leadership), which may lead to more capable judgments, but with reduced participation in decision-making and overall accountability and responsiveness. However, the weak record of technocratic leadership in Latin America, Africa, and many nations in Asia may reflect the essential weakness of economic analysis: a presumptive faith in market solutions and, more deeply, an ignorance and downplaying of political and social factors (including questions of identity [nationalism], participation, legitimacy, persuasion and consensus building, and equity), factors essential to leadership, but not within the scope of economic inquiry. Perhaps what is needed is a new class of leaders for the developing world, leaders who are trained in political economy.

Appendix 1: Database of Leaders' Educational Backgrounds

See Tables A1–A5

Key: agric = agriculture; anthro = anthropology; arch = architecture; bus = business; eco = economics; edu = education; eng = engineering; histy = history; law = law school; lit = literature; med = medical school; mgr = manager (of a business); mil = military; phil = philosophy; pol = politics; poli sci = political science; psych = psychology; pub admin = public administration; rel = religion; sci = natural sciences; socy = sociology; U = university.

Notes: I selected the most important political leader of the country (title included), and where an administration was broken up within a year, chose the leader who lasted the longest. Dual degrees that overlap these main categories are counted in both, since the country benefits from both sets of skills and knowledge. This is not an exhaustive list of countries. I have tried to capture all major governments. I have excluded all monarchies, since their selection criteria rest solely on (birth) lineage. I have placed partial education (degree not completed), where available, in parentheses and placed an asterisk next to a European or US economics degree. For graduate economics degrees, where available, I have also placed the level of the degree (MA or PhD). I have placed the excel file on my website (www.sfu.ca/~ahira) for downloading and encourage others to add to this database. Through common effort, we may be able to create a powerful database spanning additional fields and time periods.

Appendix 2: Sources for Research (see References for full citation)

An (1983)	Shamir (1994)
Balan (1982)	Smith (1998)
Barrios de Chamorro (1996)	Taylor (1967)
Bouton and Oldenberg (1990)	Tenenbaum (1996)
Brenner (1994)	Urquidi (1967)
Castagno (1975)	Wilsford (1995)
Centeno (1994)	Win and Smith (1995)
Columbia University Press (1991)	Wiseman (1991)
Corke (1993)	
Europa Publications (1998)	
Glickman (1992)	
Grolier Society of Australia (1997)	
Hahn (1981)	
Hamilton (1995)	
Ibarra and Alberro (1989)	
Kim (1976)	
Komisar (1987)	
Leng (1993)	
Les Editions Publitec (various dates)	
Oyewole (1987)	
Rake (1992)	
Rake (1994)	
Reference Publications (1977)	
St Martin's Press (1998)	

TABLE A.1. *Latin American Leaders' Educational Backgrounds*

Country	1960	Education	Degree from	Title	1970	Education	Degree from	Title
Argentina	Frondizi	law	U Buenos Aires	President	Levingston	mil	n/a	General
Bolivia	Siles Zuazo	law	Amer. Inst. (La Paz)	President	Torres Gonzales	mil	n/a	General
Brazil	Kubitschek	med	U Minas Gerais	President	Medici	mil	n/a	General
Chile	Alessandri	eng, mgr	U Chile	President	Frei Montalva	law	Cath U (Chile)	President
Colombia	Lleras Camargo	none	Natl U of Bogota (law/pol/sci)	President	Pastrana Borrero	eco	Pontificia Javeriana (Col)	President
Costa Rica	Echandi Jimenez	law	Costa Rica	President	Figueres Ferrer	none	n/a	President
Cuba	Castro	law	U Havana	Premier	Castro	law	U Havana	Premier
Dominican Rep.	Trujillo	none	n/a	none	Balaguer	law	U Santo Domingo (DR)	President
Ecuador	Velasco Ibarra	law	U Central Ecuador	President	Velasco Ibarra	law	U Central Ecuador	President
Guatemala	Ydigoras Fuentes	mil	n/a	General	Arana Osorio	mil	n/a	President
Haiti	F. Duvalier	med	U of Haiti	President	F. Duvalier	med	U of Haiti	President
Honduras	Villeda Morales	med	Natl U of Honduras	President	Lopez Arellano	mil	n/a	President
Mexico	Lopez Mateos	law	UNAM (Mexico)	President	Echeverria	law	UNAM	President
Nicaragua	L. Somoza	bus?	US	President	Ortega Saavedra	none	n/a	President
Paraguay	Stroessner	mil	n/a	General	Stroessner	mil	n/a	General
Peru	Prado	eng	Natl Schl Eng (Peru)	President	Velasco Alvarado	mil	n/a	General
Uruguay	Nardone*	none	(journalist)	President	Pacheco Areco*	none	(law schl, journalism)	President
Venezuela	Betancourt	law	U of Caracas (Ven)	President	Caldera Rodriguez	law + poli sci	Central U of Ven	President

(TABLE A.1 continued)

(TABLE A1 continued)

Country	1980	Education	Degree from	Title	1990	Education	Degree from	Title
Argentina	Videla	mil	n/a	General	Menem	law	U Nac Cordoba	President
Bolivia	Siles Zuazo	law	Amer. Inst. (La Paz)	President	Paz Zamora	socy	*Cath U Louvain, Belgium	President
Brazil	Figureiredo	mil	n/a	General	Collor	eco, journalism	Fed U Brasilia	President
Chile	Pinochet	mil	n/a	General	Aylwin	law	U Chile	President
Colombia	Turbay Ayala	bus	Colegio Universitario (Col)	President	Gaviria Trujillo	eco	U Andes	President
Costa Rica	Carazo Odio	eco	U Costa Rica	President	Calderon Fournier	law	U Costa Rica	President
Cuba	Castro	law	U Havana	President	Castro	law	U Havana	President
Dominican Rep.	Guzman Fernandez	none	n/a	President	Balaguer	law	U Santo Domingo	President
Ecuador	Roldos Aguilera	law	U Guayquil	President	Borja Cevallos	poli sci	U Central (Ecu)	President
Guatemala	Lucas Garcia	mil	n/a	President	Cerezo Arevalo	law	U San Carlos (Guat)	President
Haiti	J.-C. Duvalier	none	n/a	President	Avril	mil	n/a	General
Honduras	Paz Garcia	mil	n/a	President	Callejas Romero	eco (agric)	*Miss. St.	President
Mexico	Lopez Portillo	law	UNAM	President	Salinas	eco & pol	*Harvard (Ph)	President
Nicaragua	Ortega Saavedra	none	n/a	President	Chamorro	none	n/a	President
Paraguay	Siroessner	mil	n/a	President	Rodriguez Pedotti	mil	n/a	President
Peru	Belaunde Terry	arch	*U Texas	President	Fujimori	maths	*U Wisconsin, Mad.	President
Uruguay	Aparicio Mendez	law	U Repub Urrug.	General	Lacalle	law	U Repub Urrug.	President
Venezuela	Hererra Campins	law	Cent U Ven.	President	Perez Rodriguez	phil	Cent U Ven.	President

Country	2000	Education	Degree from	Title	2005	Education	Degree from	Title
Argentina	De la Rúa	law	U Nac Cordoba	President	Kirchner	law	La Plata (Arg)	President
Bolivia	Banzer	mil	n/a	President	Gonzalez Sanchez	lit/phil	*Chicago	President
Brazil	Cardoso	socy	U Sao Paulo	President	Lula	none	n/a	President
Chile	Lagos	eco	*Duke (Ph)	President	Lagos	eco	*Duke (Ph)	President
Colombia	Pastrana	law	*Harvard	President	Uribe	bus	*Harvard	President
Costa Rica	Rodriguez Echeverria	eco	*Berkeley (Ph)	President	Pacheco	med, psych	*Louisiana State	President
Cuba	Castro	law	U Havana	President	Castro	law	U Havana	President
Dominican Rep.	Mejía Dominguez	agric	Inst. Politec de Loyola	President	Fernandez Reyna	law	U Aut Santo Domingo	President
Ecuador	Noboa	law	Catolica	President	Alfredo Palacio	med	U Guayquil	President
Guatemala	Arzu Irigoyen	law	Rafael Landivar	President	Berger	law	U Rafael Landivar	President
Haiti	Preval	agric	*Cath U Louvain, Belgium	President	n/a civil war			
Honduras	Flores Facusse	eng	*Louisiana State	President	Maduro	eco, eng	*Stanford	President
Mexico	Fox	bus	*Harvard	President	Fox	bus	*Harvard	President
Nicaragua	Aleman	law	U Nac Leon	President	Bolanos	eng	*U St. Louis	President
Paraguay	Gonzalez Macchi	none	n/a	President	Duarte Frutos	law	Natl U Asuncion	President
Peru	Fujimori	maths	*U Wisconsin, Mad.	President	Toledo	eco (edu)	*Stanford (Ph)	President
Uruguay	Sanguinetti	law	U Repub Urug.	President	Tabare Vasquez	med	U Repub Urug.	President
Venezuela	Chavez	mil	n/a	President	Chavez	mil	n/a	President

TABLE A.2. African Leaders' Educational Backgrounds

Country	1960	Education	Degree from	Title	1970	Education	Degree from	Title
Angola	not independent				Neto	med	*Us Lisbon & Coimbra	President
Botswana	Khama	law	*Oxford	President	Khama	law	*Oxford	President
Ethiopia	Selassie	none	n/a	Emperor	Selassie	none	n/a	Emperor
Ghana	Nkrumah	phil	*U Penn	PM	Busia	social anthro	*Oxford	PM
Ivory Coast	Houphouët-Boigny	med	Dakar	President	Houphouët-Boigny	med	Dakar	President
Kenya	not independent				Kenyatta	social anthro	*LSE	President
Mozambique	not independent				Machel	mil	n/a	President
Nigeria	Azikiwe	anthro	*U Penn	Governor-General	Gowon	poli sci	*Warwick	President
Senegal	Senghor	French grammar	*U Paris	President	Senghor	French grammar	*U Paris	President
Sierra Leone	Margai	med	*U Durham (UK)	PM	Stevens	labor relations	*Oxford	PM
Somalia	Ali Shermake	pol	*U Rome	PM	Siad Barre	mil	n/a	President
South Africa	Verwoerd	psych	Stellenbosch (S Afr)	PM	Vorster	law	Stellenbosch (S Afr)	PM
Sudan	Abboud	mil	n/a	General	Nimeiry	mil	n/a	President
Tanzania	Nyerere	eco, histy	*U Edinburgh	President	Nyerere	eco, histy	*U Edinburgh	President
Uganda	not independent				Obote	none	(Makerere)	President
Zaire/Rep. Congo	Lumumba	none	n/a	PM	Mobutu	mil	n/a	President
Zambia	not independent				Kaunda	none	(Munali Teacher Training)	President
Zimbabwe	not independent				Smith	bus	Rhodes U S Afr	PM

Country	1980	Education	Degree from	Title	1990	Education	Degree from	Title
Angola	Dos Santos	eng (petrol)	*Patrice Lumumba (Moscow)	President	Dos Santos	eng (petrol)	*Patrice Lumumba (Moscow)	President
Botswana	Masire	trades	Tiger Kloof Inst (S Afr)		Masire	trades	Tiger Kloof Inst (S Afr)	President
Ethiopia	Mengistu	mil	n/a	General	Mengistu	mil	n/a	General
Ghana	Hilla Limann	poli sci, law	*Sorbonne (Paris)	President	Rawlings	mil	n/a	Flight Lieutenant
Ivory Coast	Houphouet-Boigny	med	Dakar	President	Houphouet-Boigny	med	Dakar	President
Kenya	Moi	none	(Teacher Training College)	President	Moi	none	(Teacher Training College)	President
Mozambique	Machel Shagari	mil	n/a	President	Chissano	mil	n/a	President
Nigeria		none	(Kaduna College-teach)	President	Babangida	mil	n/a	General
Senegal	Senghor	French grammar labor relations	*U Paris	President	Abdou-Diouf	law	*ENFOM (Paris)	President
Sierra Leone	Stevens		*Oxford	PM	Momoh	mil	n/a	President
Somalia	Siad Barre	mil	n/a	President	Siad Barre	mil	n/a	President
South Africa	P. Botha	none	(law)	PM	De Klerk	law	Potschefstroom U	President
Sudan	Nimeiry	mil	n/a	President	Nimeiry	mil	n/a	General
Tanzania	Nyerere	eco, histy	*U Edinburgh	President	Mwinyi	edu	Zanzibar Teachers' Training Coll.	President
Uganda	Obote	none	(Makerere)	President	Museveni	eco, poli sci	U Dar es Salaam	President
Zaire/Rep. Congo	Mobutu	mil	n/a	President	Mobutu	mil	n/a	President
Zambia	Kaunda	none	(Munali Teacher Training)	President	Kaunda	none	(Munali Teacher Training)	President
Zimbabwe	Mugabe	eco	Fort Hare (S Afr)	PM	Mugabe	eco	Fort Hare (S Afr)	President

(TABLE A2 continued)

(TABLE A2 continued)

Country	2000	Education	Degree from	Title	2005	Education	Degree from	Title
Angola	Dos Santos	eng (petrol)	*Patrice Lumumba (Moscow)	President	Dos Santos	eng (petrol)	*Patrice Lumumba (Moscow)	President
Botswana	Mogae	eco	*Oxford, Sussex	President	Mogae	eco	*Oxford, Sussex	President
Ethiopia	Zenawi	mil	n/a	PM	Zenawi	mil	n/a	PM
Ghana	Rawlings	mil	n/a	President	Kuftor	phil, poli sci, eco	*Oxford	President
Ivory Coast	Guei	mil	n/a	General	Gbagbo	histy	Abdijan	President
Kenya	Moi	none	(Teacher Training College)	President	Mwai Kibaki	eco (public finance)	LSE	President
Mozambique	Chissano	mil	n/a	President	Guebuza	mil	n/a	President
Nigeria	Obasanjo	mil	n/a	President	Obasanjo	mil	n/a	President
Senegal	Abdoulaye Wade	law & eco	*Besancon, France (Ph)	President	Abdoulaye Wade	law & eco	*Besancon, France (Ph)	President
Sierra Leone	Kabbah	law & eco	U Coll Aberystwyth, UK	President	Kabbah	law & eco	U Coll Aberystwyth, UK	President
Somalia	Salad Hassan	mil	n/a	President	Yusuf Ahmed	mil	n/a	President
South Africa	Mbeki	eco	*Sussex	President	Mbeki	eco	*Sussex (MA)	President
Sudan	al-Bashir	mil	n/a	General	al-Bashir	mil	n/a	President
Tanzania	Mkapa	English	Makerere	President	Mkapa	English	Makerere	President
Uganda	Museveni	eco, poli sci	U Dar es Salaam	President	Museveni	eco, poli sci	U Dar es Salaam	President
Zaire/Rep. Congo	L. Kabila	poli phil	France	President	J. Kabila	mil	n/a	President
Zambia	Chiluba	none	(edu-correspondence)	President	Mwanawasa	law	U Zambia	President
Zimbabwe	Mugabe	eco	Fort Hare (S Afr)	President	Mugabe	eco	Fort Hare (S Afr)	President

TABLE A3. *Middle Eastern Leaders' Educational Backgrounds*

Country	1960	Education	Degree from	Title	1970	Boumedienne	Education	Degree from	Title
Algeria	Ben Bella	mil	n/a	President	Boumedienne		rel, mil	Constantine Inst (Alg)	President
Egypt	Nasser	mil	n/a	President	Nasser		mil	n/a	President
Iran	Reza Shah Pahlavi	mil	n/a	Shah	Reza Shah Pahlavi		mil	n/a	Shah
Iraq	Najib ar-Ruba'i	mil	n/a	President	al Bakr		mil	n/a	President
Israel	Ben Gurion	none	n/a	PM	Meir		edu	*Milwaukee St. Normal Schl	PM
Jordan	Hussein	mil	*Sandhurst	King	Hussein		mil	*Sandhurst	King
Libya	Idris I	mil	n/a	King	Gadafi		mil, law	*Sandhurst, U Libya	Leader
Tunisia	Bourguiba	law	U Paris	President	Bourguiba		law	U Paris	President
Turkey	Gursel	mil	n/a	PM	Demirel		eng	Istanbul Tech (+US)	PM
Country	1980	Education	Degree from	Title	1990	Education	Degree from	Title	
Algeria	Benjedid	mil	n/a	President	Benjedid		mil	n/a	President
Egypt	Sadat	mil	n/a	President	Mubarak		mil	n/a (USSR)	President
Iran	Khomeini	rel	Qom	President	Rafsanjani		rel	Qom	President
Iraq	Hussein	law	Cairo U	Chairman	Hussein		law	Cairo U	Chairman
Israel	Begin	law	*U Warsaw	PM	Shamir		none	n/a	PM
Jordan	Hussein	mil	*Sandhurst	King	Hussein		mil	*Sandhurst	King
Libya	Gadafi	mil, law	*Sandhurst, U Libya	Leader	Gadafi		mil, law	*Sandhurst, U Libya	Leader
Tunisia	Bourguiba	law	U Paris	President	Ben Ali		mil	n/a (France)	President
Turkey	Demirel	eng	Istanbul Tech (+US)	PM	Ozal		eng	Istanbul Tech	President

(TABLE A3 continued)

(TABLE A3 continued)

Country	2000	Education	Degree from	Title	2005	Education	Degree from	Title
Algeria	Bouteflika	mil	n/a	President	Bouteflika	mil	n/a	President
Egypt	Mubarak	mil	n/a (USSR)	President	Mubarak	mil	n/a (USSR)	President
Iran	Khatami	rel (+western phil)	Qom	President	Khatami	rel (+western phil)	Qom	President
Iraq	Hussein	law	Cairo U	Chairman	Talabani	law	Baghdad U	President
Israel	Barak	eng, eco	*Stanford (MA)	PM	Sharon	mil	n/a	PM
Jordan	Hussein	mil	*Sandhurst	King	Abdullah II	mil (+intl relations)	*Sandhurst (Georgetown, Oxford)	King
Libya	Gaddafi	mil, law	*Sandhurst, U Libya	Leader	Gaddafi	mil, law	*Sandhurst, U Libya	Leader
Tunisia	Ben Ali	mil	n/a (France)	President	Ben Ali	mil	n/a (France)	President
Turkey	Ecevit	none	(Istanbul, US, UK)	PM	Erdogan	bus	Marmora U	PM

TABLE A.4. *Asian Leaders' Educational Backgrounds*

Country	1960	Education	Degree from	Title	1970	Education	Degree from	Title
China	Mao	none	(Beijing U)	Chairman	Mao	none	(Beijing U)	Chairman
India	Nehru	law	*Cambridge	PM	I. Gandhi	none	(Oxford)	PM
Indonesia	Sukarno	eng	Inst. Tech-Bandung	President	Suharto	mil	n/a	President
Japan	Ikeda Hayato	law & eco	Kyoto Imperial	PM	Sato Eisaku	law	Tokyo Imperial	PM
Malaysia	Abdul Rahman	law	*Cambridge	PM	Abdul Razak	law	*Lincoln's Inn (UK)	PM
Myanmar	U Nu	law	U Rangoon	Premier	U Ne Win	mil	n/a	General
North Korea	Kim Il Sung	mil	n/a (Soviet trained)	PM	Kim Il Sung	mil	n/a (Soviet trained)	PM
Pakistan	Ayub Khan	mil	n/a (Sandhurst)	PM	Yahya Khan	mil	n/a	President
Philippines	Marcos	law	U Philippines	President	Marcos	law	U Philippines	President
Singapore	Lee Kwan Yew	law	*Cambridge	PM	Lee Kwan Yew	law	*Cambridge	PM
South Korea	Rhee	poli sci	*Princeton	President	Park Chung Hee	mil, edu	Daegu Teacher's Coll	President
Taiwan	Ch. Kai-Shek	mil	n/a (Japan)	President	Ch. Kai-Shek	mil	n/a (Japan)	President
Thailand	Dhanarajata	mil	n/a	General	Kitkachorn	mil	n/a	General

(TABLE A.4 continued)

(TABLE A4 continued)

Country	1980	Education	Degree from	Title	1990	Education	Degree from	Title
China	Deng Xiaoping	communism	n/a (France, Moscow)	Chairman	Deng Xiaoping	communism	n/a (France, Moscow)	Chairman
India	I. Gandhi	none	(Oxford)	PM	V.P. Singh	law	Poona	PM
Indonesia	Suharto	mil	n/a	President	Suharto	mil	n/a	President
Japan	Suzuki Zenko	other (tech.)	Tokyo U Fisheries	PM	Kaifu Toshiki	law	Waseda	PM
Malaysia	Hussein Onn	mil	n/a	PM	Mahathir	med	King Edward VII (Sing)	PM
Myanmar	U Ne Win	mil	n/a	General	Saw Maung	mil	n/a (eng)	General
North Korea	Kim Il Sung	mil	n/a (Soviet trained)	President	Kim Il Sung	mil	n/a (Soviet trained)	President
Pakistan	Zia-ul-Haq	mil	n/a	President	B. Bhutto	eco, pol, phil	*Oxford (MA)	PM
Philippines	Marcos	law	U Philippines	President	Aquino	French (+maths)	*Coll Mt. St. Vincent (NY)	President
Singapore	Lee Kwan Yew	law	*Cambridge	PM	Lee Kwan Yew	law	*Cambridge	PM
South Korea	Doo-hwan	mil	n/a	President	Roe Tae Woo	mil	n/a	President
Taiwan	Chiang Ching Kuo	none (communism-Soviet)	n/a	President	Lee Teng-hui	eco (agric)	*Cornell (Ph)	President
Thailand	Tinsulanonda	mil	n/a	PM	Choonhavan	mil	n/a	PM

Country	2000	Education	Degree from	Title	2005	Education	Degree from	Title
China	Jiang Zemin	electrical mechanics	Jiaotong U	General Secretary	Hu Jintao	eng	Qinghua	Pres., Chairman, General Secretary
India	Vajpayee	poli sci	DAV-Kanpur	PM	Singh	eco	Oxford (Ph)	PM
Indonesia	Wahid	rel	Baghdad	President	Yúdhoyono	eco (agric)	Bogor Inst. of Agric (MA- Webster)	President
Japan	Mori	bus	Waseda	PM	Koizumi	eco	Keio	PM
Malaysia	Mahathir	med	King Edward VII (Sing)	PM	Badawi	rel	U. Malaya	PM
Myanmar	Than Shwe	mil	n/a	General	Than Shwe	mil	n/a	General
North Korea	Kim Yong Il	poli eco, mil	Kim Il Sung U	Chair, General Secretary, Supreme Commander	Kim Yong Il	poli eco, mil	Kim Il Sung U	Chair, General Secretary, Supreme Commander
Pakistan	Musharraf	mil	Foreman Christian Coll (Lahore)	General	Musharraf	mil	Foreman Christian Coll (Lahore)	President
Philippines	Estrada	none	(actor)	President	Marcapagal- Arroyo	eco	U. Philippines	President
Singapore	Chok Tong	eco	*Williams Coll (MA)	PM	Hsien Loong	public administration	*Harvard	PM
South Korea	Dae Jung	none	n/a	President	Moo-hyun	none	(law)	President
Taiwan	Shui-bian	law	Natl Taiwan U	President	Shui-bian	law	Natl Taiwan U	President
Thailand	Leekpai	law	Thammasat U	PM	Shinawatra	criminal justice	*Sam Houston St.	PM

TABLE A5. Western Leaders' Educational Backgrounds

Country	1960	Education	Degree from	Title	1970	Education	Degree from	Title
Australia	Menzies	law	Melbourne	PM	Gorton	mil, histy, pol, eco	Oxford	PM
USA	Eisenhower	mil	West Point	President	Nixon	law	Duke	President
Canada	Diefenbaker	law	Saskatchewan	PM	Trudeau	law, pol eco	Montreal, Harvard	PM
UK	Macmillan	mil	(Oxford-classics)	PM	Heath	phil, pol, eco	Oxford	PM
SU/Russia	Khrushchev	mil	n/a	1st Secretary	Brezhnev	eng	Dneprodzerzhinsk Metallurgical Institute	General Secretary
France	De Gaulle	mil	n/a	President	Pompidou	lit	Ecole Normale Supérieure	President
Germany	Adenauer	law	Bonn	Chancellor	Brandt	none	(apprenticeship broker)	Chancellor
Italy	Fanfani	poli eco	U of Sacred Heart, Milan	PM	Rumor	edu	U Padua	PM

Country	1980	Education	Degree from	Title	1990	Education	Degree from	Title
Australia	Fraser	pol, eco	Oxford	PM	Hawke	eco	Oxford	PM
USA	Carter	eng (sci), mil	US Naval Academy	President	Bush	law	Yale	President
Canada	Trudeau	law, poli eco	Montreal, Harvard	PM	Mulroney	law	Laval	PM
UK	Thatcher	chemistry	Oxford	PM	Thatcher	chemistry	Oxford	PM
SU/Russia	Brezhnev	eng	Dneprodzerzhinsk Metallurgical Institute	General Secretary	Gorbachev	law	Moscow	General Secretary
France	D'Estraing	eco (public administration)	Ecol Natl de l'Admin	President	Mitterrand	law, pol	U Paris	President
Germany	Schmidt	eco, poli sci	Hamburg	Chancellor	Kohl	pol	U Heidelberg	Chancellor
Italy	Cossiga	law	Sassari	PM	Andreotti	law	U Rome	PM
Country	2000	Education	Degree from	Title	2005	Education	Degree from	Title
Australia	Howard	law	Sydney	PM	Howard	law	Sydney	PM
USA	Clinton	law	Yale	President	Bush Jr	bus	Harvard (MBA)	President
Canada	Chretien	law	Laval	PM	Martin	law	Toronto	PM
UK	Blair	law	Oxford	PM	Blair	law	Oxford	PM
SU/Russia	Putin	law	Leningrad St (intell)	President	Putin	law	Leningrad St (intell)	President
France	Chirac	eco (public administration)	Inst. D'Etudes Pols, Ecol Natl d'Admin	President	Chirac	public administration	Inst. D'Etudes Pols, Ecol Natl d'Admin	President
Germany	Schroder	law	U Gottingen	Chancellor	Schroder	law	U Gottingen	Chancellor
Italy	D'Alema	none (phil)	(Scuola Normale Superior di Pisa)	PM	Berlusconi	law	Universita Statale	PM

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Note

1. GINI statistics measure the steepness of the curvature from the lowest income deciles to the highest in a country, thus the higher the number, the steeper the difference between the poor and the rich. There are, unfortunately, no uniform time series on inequality; these are the best data available on an international level. I have included selected key historical years for countries for which there was one reliable study source. I have selected coverage of the whole nation, rather than just urban areas, wherever possible.

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Biographical Note

ANIL HIRA is Associate Professor of Political Science and Latin American Studies at Simon Fraser University, Canada. His publications include *Ideas and Economic Policy in Latin America: Regional, National, and Organizational Case Studies*; *Political Economy of Energy in the Southern Cone*; *Development Projects for a New Millennium* (with Trevor Parfitt); *Outsourcing America* (with Ron Hira); and *An East Asian Model for Latin American Success: The New Path*, along with numerous articles. His recent research focuses on industrial policy, including specific applications of energy and technology policy, with a focus on East Asia and Latin America. ADDRESS: Department of Political Science, Simon Fraser University, 8888 University Drive, Burnaby, BC, Canada V5A 1S6 [email: ahira@sfu.ca].

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